



Postal Regulatory Commission
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CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONGRESSWOMAN
CHELLIE PINGREE

1ST DISTRICT
MAINE

August 19, 2011

To whom it may concern,

As part of the U.S. Postal Service's attempt to achieve long-term financial stability, it has come to my attention that several Post Offices in Maine are being considered for closure. In the First District of Maine, this includes Post Offices in Augusta, Bowdoin, Chamberlain, Cliff Island, East Parsonfield, East Vassalboro, Matinicus Island, Portland (station A), Sebasco Estates, and Trevett. I am writing to request that the Postal Service reconsider because of the vital role these offices play in these rural communities of my district.

For many Maine towns, the Post Office is a way of life. It's a place where people meet and share information with one another. It is a place they go and, on the way, shop at local stores. It's a critical link for elderly people who utilize the Post Office for medicine and other necessary goods that they can't access elsewhere. Many simply can't afford to go on to the next Post Office for these critical services.

Rural towns all over America have faced serious job losses during our protracted economic downturn. As more and more mills close, and the manufacturing industry struggles to recuperate, rural parts of our country are struggling to keep their communities alive. As a vital piece of infrastructure in these communities, the town Post Office is more important than ever.

I know the U.S. Postal Service is experiencing difficult times. But I do not believe that closing small postal offices, the backbone of many small towns, is the solution to their financial problems. In fact, brick and mortar costs very little, relative to other expenses. Rather, the Postal Service should look into the billions it has overpaid in pension funds, as two recent studies have found.

Post Offices in small Maine towns serve an essential and indispensable role for a community. I strongly urge the Postal Regulatory Commission to consider the importance of these Post Offices for the dedicated patrons they serve.

Sincerely,

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress